

Planning and Development Committee

Public Testimony

Friday February 19, 2016

Testimony **AGAINST** House Bill 5178 - An Act Concerning the Licensing of Dogs

Esteemed Members of the Committee:

My name is Joan Lamont and I am an animal control officer in Windham. I am testifying in opposition to HB 5178, a proposal to change dog licenses from one to three year licenses.

The purpose of licenses is foremost to ensure that all dogs have current rabies vaccinations, not to “keep track of how many dogs there are in the state,” as one supporter of the bill stated. It is a way for every town to protect the health of its residents by ensuring ongoing compliance with state-mandated rabies vaccination through the process of annual licensing. In any year, untold numbers of dogs are receiving one year rabies vaccinations either because it is their first one, which is always good for only one year, or because their previous vaccination had expired.

Thousands of CT residents obtain a new dog during the course of a year. If those dogs are puppies or previously unvaccinated dogs, they are all going to have only a one year rabies vaccination. I see far more dogs with one year rabies vaccinations than three year vaccinations, and I see many people who fail to obtain the subsequent rabies vaccination booster (the one that would be good for three years). A three year license could potentially result in a dog remaining unvaccinated for nearly two years after its first (one year) vaccine.

Filling out a dog license renewal form and envelope takes about sixty seconds. I don't know of a single town that doesn't take renewals by mail, nor have I heard of any town being overwhelmed with people trying to obtain dog licenses.

The annual canvass for unlicensed dogs is also a great way to make contact with members of the community and to provide public education on responsible pet care as well as assistance to people who may not be aware of affordable resources for their pet's rabies vaccination.

I respectfully request that you vote against HB 5178.

Joan Lamont
Animal Control Officer
Town of Windham